



# FOCAL POINT

<http://assabetvalleycc.com> - The club meets on the first and third Wednesdays of each month except July and August. Meetings are hybrid - in person at the Hudson Senior Center, 29 Church St., Hudson and on Zoom. Meetings begin at 7:00 PM with a 15 minute social time and at 7:15 a brief business meeting. Programs start at 7:30 PM. Email us at [avcc.digital@hotmail.com](mailto:avcc.digital@hotmail.com) for more information or if you wish to attend as a guest.



*Eclipse in totality - Jonathan Bush*

*"We are discovering what the universe is really like, and it is totally magnificent, and one can only be inspired and awestruck by what we find."*

*- John C. Mather*

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## Note from Our President

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Hello All,

First, let me say thank you to Sue Abrahamsen for volunteering to present her programs, “Costa Rica Hummingbirds and More” and “Birds of South Texas” this month. We were hoping to repeat last year’s May program: “What Went into Making Your Image,” but the absence of a few of our technical wizards for the meeting this month, coupled with the Senior Center not being available, forced us to change plans at the last minute.

I’d like to congratulate the Newsletter Team for being asked to judge the PSA (Photographic Society of America) annual Newsletter Competition by Richard James, the PSA Newsletter Competition Director.

Several new members have joined AVCC since the start of 2024 and we wish to extend a warm welcome to Sheri Craig, Neil Swinton, Jonathan Bush, Paul Loiselle, and Louis Snitkoff!

There will be an Executive Committee Meeting Wednesday, May 22nd, at 6:30 PM. The agenda will include selecting topics for next season’s competitions and a review of the by-law updates. All are invited and encouraged to attend.

If you have any ideas for programs for next season, please let me know through an email so that the program committee can start work on that.

Our last meeting of the year on June 5th is jam-packed. We will have the Annual Banquet, a Tribute to Dave Reynard, the Image of the Year presentation, and the Election of Officers for 2024-2025. The meeting will start at 6:00 PM at the Hudson Senior Center. If a quorum is present we will also vote on accepting the revised bylaws. We need 2/3 of entire club membership present to vote on the bylaws. Please let Linda Gilberti or Linda Shelales know if you plan to attend.

We are looking for people to run for office and assist with various committees and tasks. We will be forming a nominating committee. Our club thrives on volunteers to keep it going. There are a few members who volunteer countless hours behind the scenes to keep things running and to provide the programs, set up competitions, organize field trips and so much more - many hands make for lighter work - please consider volunteering to help.

Due to personal reasons, I am looking for someone willing to run for president for the upcoming season.

Pudge

## Note from the Editors

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*“The moment one gives close attention to anything, even a blade of grass, it becomes a mysterious, awesome, indescribably magnificent world in itself.” (Henry Miller)*

Doesn't this quote from Henry Miller describe us photography lovers – the paying attention, the noticing, the taking in of our subject, our surroundings, the natural world and the world of human experience. And doesn't it speak to the drive we have to go out and shoot again and again to experience and capture the mystery and awe of our world? This month we focus on the stories of members experiencing the natural world's phenomenon of the solar eclipse, and we consider the marvel of things that fly.

On April 8th, a number of club members took to the road to capture the solar eclipse. Others watched at home, and others simply went about their usual business. This month we feature stories and images from members' solar eclipse experiences in place of the member interview.

May's competition category is “Things that Fly or Airborne” (in honor of Elliot Mednick). For new members who did not know Elliot, he was a passionate photographer, and a member of the club for five years. He was President from 2021-2023. He died in May, 2023. Elliot had a passion for planes and loved to photograph them; hence the topic for this month's competition. To illustrate, here is an excerpt from Elliot's interview, published in our Focal Point Newsletter last May: “He grew up in the Chicago area and watched planes come in to O'Hare. He was ‘fascinated by how these giant things that weigh thousands of tons can actually fly.’ He loves photographing planes so much that he took a helicopter tour of LA Airport, from which he could see planes from above.”

To get you set for this month's competition, our Tips & Tricks section is on photographing things in flight. Also, be sure to check out the list of competitions you can submit to. If you're feeling less than confident about trying, ask yourself, “what have I got to lose?”

For our May program, our own Sue Abrahamsen will present a slide show on her photography trips to Costa Rica and Texas. We have had a sneak preview of her presentation, which is set to music. It is lovely and inspiring. Thank you, Sue!

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## Note from the Editors - continued from page 3

The Newsletter Team was surprised and very honored to receive an email from Richard James, PSA Newsletter Competition Director, asking if we would consider being judges for this year's competition. Mr. James stated that he had "been through the newsletters of PSA member clubs and was impressed" with Focal Point. Due to travel plans and other commitments, none of us is able to participate this year, but we look forward to future opportunities. PSA's notice was particularly surprising and interesting since our newsletter does not fit in either of the categories of the PSA's competition (a quarterly journal structure or a no-more-than-10-page structure).

AVCC will hold its Annual Meeting on Wednesday, June 5, 2024, starting at 6 pm. Note the time difference from our usual starting time of 7. The evening will include a Tribute to Dave Reynard, a founding member of the club who recently passed away.

Go. Shoot. Be in awe.

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Congratulations to Darlene Holman who received a perfect score of 30 in the AVCC April 17 Nature Competition for her image "Osprey Fishing in the Creek".



*Osprey Fishing in the Creek - Darlene Holman*



## May Program

AVCC is pleased to present “Costa Rica Hummingbirds and More,” followed by “Birds of South Texas,” presented by Sue Abrahamsen Wednesday, May 1, 2024 at 7:30 PM. The meeting will be held on Zoom only due to the unavailability of the Hudson Senior Center that evening. Look for the email from John Mauro with the Zoom link. The Zoom meeting room opens at 7:00 with a 15 minute social time followed by AVCC business at 7:15. The program begins at 7:30 PM. Non-members interested in attending as guests should email [avcc.digital@hotmail.com](mailto:avcc.digital@hotmail.com).

### Costa Rica Hummingbirds and More Birds of South Texas

Sue Abrahamsen is a life-long photographer who grew up in Connecticut and who has since traveled to many places in both the US and the world. An early influence was her father who liked nature and took a lot of wildflower photos on hikes and walks. Her photos, particularly of birds, have earned many awards. One photo (see the next page), entered into an Overseas Adventure Travel competition, won her a trip for 2 to any of their destinations! She and her husband, Tom, chose to go to New Zealand.

While not a founding member of AVCC, Sue joined about a year after it started. She heard about it after going to a course at Assabet Valley Regional Technical High School with the same teacher, Norm Eggert, whose course the founding club members had taken. Sue served as Program Chair in the club for 15 years.

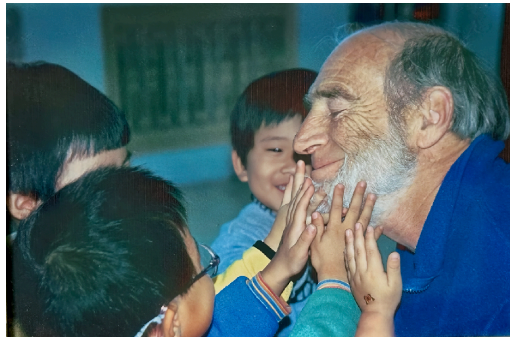
Sue has traveled extensively for both photography and non-photography trips, traveling 1-2 times per year for photography. Some recent photography trips were to Costa Rica and Iceland. She recommends trips through Joe and Mary Ann McDonald (<https://www.hoothollow.com/index.html>) as well as Mike Milicia (<https://www.michaelmiliciaphotography.com/instruction>). Another wonderful photo trip was with Joseph Van Os. She went to Brazil to photograph jaguars (<https://photosafaris.com/photo-tours/>).

According to Sue the most important thing in photography is the “eye of seeing”— the light, details, shadows, highlights, shapes and how they interact with each other.

To learn more about Sue see the January 2023 Issue of the AVCC Focal Point Newsletter in the Focal Point Newsletter Archives. You can find this under Organization on the Web Page.

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May Program - "Costa Rica Hummingbirds and More" and "Birds of South Texas" - continued from page 4



*Image Courtesy of Sue Abrahamsen*

The Programs:



May 1st programs: "Costa Rica Hummingbirds and more." Followed by "Birds of South Texas"  
Both shows are my results from 2 different Photo tours I took led by Joe and MaryAnn McDonald



*"I wish that all of nature's magnificence, the emotion of the land, the living energy of place could be photographed." – Annie Leibovitz*

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*Svalbard - Eric Frere*

## Looking Ahead - AVCC 2023-2024 Program Schedule

Date	Program	Presentor
9/6/23	"What I did this Summer" Member Slideshows	AVCC Members
10/4/23	"Architecture Abstracts"	Angie McGonagle
10/25/23	<b>*Special Program in Honor of Elliot Mednick</b>	Essdras Suarez
11/1/23	"ICM - More than just Pretty"	Silvana Della Camera
12/6/23	Photographing Trees and Forests	Paul Nguyễn
1/3/24	"What were they Thinking?" How images are judged	Todd and Maureen Mathieson
2/7/24	"Flower and Garden Photography"	Irene Sacilotto
3/6/24	"A Murmur in the Trees"	Suzanne Revy
4/3/24	"The Natural Look" HDR Imaging	Hazel Meredith
5/1/24	"Costa Rica Hummingbirds" and "Birds of South Texas"	Sue Abrahamsen
6/5/24	Image of the Year Awards - Dave Reynard Tribute	

Link to the club website calendar for all deadline, program, and competition dates: [AVCC Calendar](#)

Or find it on the AVCC website by clicking on "Organization" at the top of the page, then "Club Calendar" in the dropdown list.

## Competitions 2023-2024

### Monthly Competitions:

The club holds monthly image competitions including three categories: print, digital and open. The images are judged by a panel of three judges using a scale of 3.0-10. The final score for an image is the total of the three scores. See the [AVCC webpage](#) for more information about the rules and procedures for monthly competitions as well as the PSA and NECCC competitions. Pay particular attention to the PSA definitions for “Nature”, [Monochrome](#), and [Travel](#) submissions.

### Schedule of Monthly Competition Category Topics & Submission Dates

Month	Print (Details TBD)	Digital	Open	Digital and Open Submission Date
September		Monochrome	Open	9/13/2023
October	Tools	Nature	Open	10/11/2023
November	N/A	Architectural Detail	Open	11/8/2023
December	Still Life	Nature	Open	12/13/2023
January	Open	In the Woods	Open	1/10/2024
February	Entryways	Nature	Open	2/14/2024
March	Nature	Creative (In or out of camera)	Open	3/13/2024
April	Open	Nature	Open	4/10/2024
May	Open	Things that Fly or Airborne (in honor of Elliot)	Open	5/8/2024

### PSA and NECCC

Image selections to the PSA & NECCC Interclub Competitions are made by the representatives to each organization. Individual entries can also be made to PSA competitions if you are a member. Our PSA representative is Todd Mathieson; our NECCC representative is Robyn Saur.

NECCC has moved to have individual print competitions rather than interclub print competitions at this time. The NECCC Individual Print Competition will be hosted at the Greater Lynn Photographic Association (GLPA). The categories are B&W (mono) and Color. Competitions will be held on Nov. 4, 2023 and April 6, 2024. More details can be found here: <https://greaterlynnphoto.org/NECCC>.

FYI: PSA Guidelines for Borders: Not recommended for Nature but if any border is added to a Nature, Travel or PJ image it must be a small border of a neutral color (gray tones). There are no border restrictions in the PID Color or Monochrome Division.



### Member Snapshot

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#### Eclipse Experiences - Mini Snapshots

We asked members to share their eclipse photos and experiences from April 8th. Some members stayed in the local area and were treated to 93% sun coverage. Here are their stories:

**From Nick Andruzzi:**

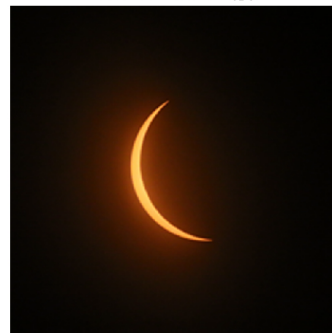
Here is my composite of eclipse pictures shot at Ghiloni Park in Marlborough. This was my first time photographing an eclipse of any type while also watching it happen. It made for quite an experience.



IMG\_8492 231 PM.jpg



IMG\_8504 300 PM.jpg



IMG\_8522 320 PM.jpg



IMG\_8547 352 PM.jpg

**From Linda Shelales:**

As for eclipse day, since I had no special filter for my camera lens, I opted to video my face as I watched

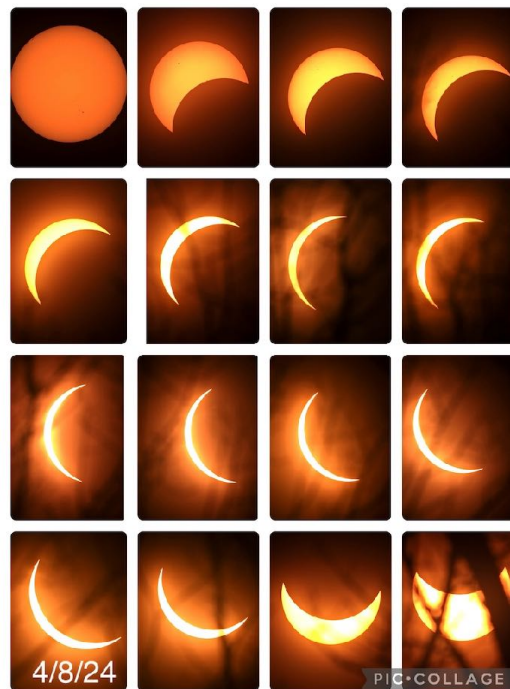


the eclipse hoping that the shadow would darken my fair skin in an obvious way... It did not! Even with only a sliver of the sun grinning back at me, the light remained surprisingly bright. In this way, the eclipse reminded me of the power of a human smile! I watched this grand moon shadow dance with hubby from our deck, serenaded by joyful cardinals and scolded by disturbed robins. I wanted to listen to what 'my' birds would say, or not say, about this poetic moment in time. - Mixed reviews, from what I gathered! However, the spirit of shared human awe was palpable and I was inspired to pray for us all as the moon slipped away. - Recorded for whomever when I'm long gone.

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**From Natalie Schiavone:**

I picked up my son from school on the day of the eclipse. He asked to stop at Dunkin on the way home (which he never does) and I said No Way! The eclipse is starting! When we got home I set up my telescope. We put on our eclipse glasses and watched. We had fun sitting on the couch too and watching it from my phone which links to the telescope. I have great memories with him from that day.



*Image Courtesy of Natalie Schiavone*

**From Pam Meoli**

"I was probably the only one in the world who didn't care about seeing the Eclipse. Definitely not nearly enough to drive all that way - I'm not good on long car rides. So my friend and I met at a coffee shop here in Northborough. At 2:00 a bunch of high schoolers came in with their glasses and were excited. I asked if they could see anything and they said "yeah - it's so cool". So we went outside, there



*Image Courtesy of Pam Meoli*

were about 12 people out there and of course we didn't have glasses. Some nice girls let us use their glasses and yes - it was very cool. At 93% we saw a bright orange crescent. As a bit of time went by - there were two guys near us. Older guys - one on a motorcycle - kind of old hippie type (no discrimination here - I'm an old hippie also- somewhat) and asked if we'd take their picture. Then it started to get darker, then it got colder and it was like being in the Twilight Zone. The guy on the bike said he heard the birds would be affected - he expected to see them drop out of the sky as in an Alfred Hitchcock movie. They were pretty funny. Here is my favorite shot of the day. Reminds me of the Japanese movies where the words don't match and King Kong is coming!

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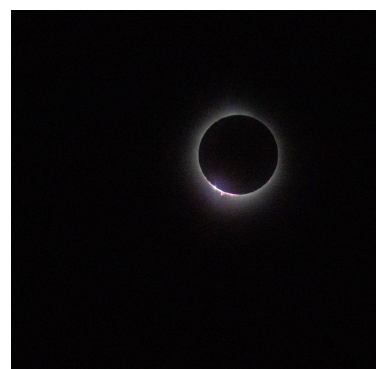
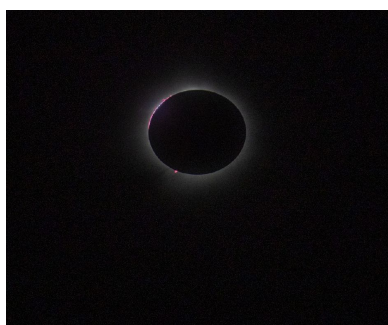
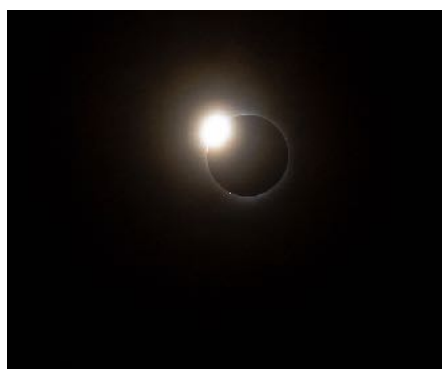


## Member Snapshot - continued from page 10

Others headed North or Northwest in a quest for the total experience.

### **From Bridget Perch:**

I went to a friend's house in Waterbury, VT with my husband and a friend. We had a great time and I am glad we made the trip. We took a walk before the big event. A neighbor let us look through a solar telescope and see the sun up close. I was able to see the veins on the sun. I find humor in the fact that it took 3.15 hours and a half a tank of gas to get there and 6.5 hours and a half a tank of gas to get home. The whole experience was amazing. My husband appreciated that I yelled "take off your glasses" at the right time so everybody could see the diamond ring and the rest of the totality. My favorite part was that I went and did it. I had talked myself out of going. I then felt bad about this decision. I was able to find a way to go that made me comfortable and was so happy I decided to go. If I had the chance to see the eclipse again, I would go in a heartbeat. It was a great experience to share with family and friends.



*Images Courtesy of  
Bridget Perch*

### **From Jane Parker:**

We headed for St. Johnsbury, VT, Monday morning, and we helped create "The Traffic" on I93. Everyone in the car brought food to share, and we had a full tank of gas.

After seven hours of creeping along, we left the highway, and chose a Burger King parking lot in Littleton, NH to wait for the eclipse. There were picnic tables, and only fifteen, or so, other people. I was struck by how quiet everyone became as the darkness reached us. All the Burger King signs turned on, that was funny and amazing to us, for some reason! It was peaceful, and exciting, all at the same time.

Lucky for us, we ended up on the southern edge of the totality. We're still not sure if we were in the path of the total eclipse, or not. I had no filter for my camera, so I didn't photograph any of the eclipse. Between the 5 of us we had 2 eclipse glasses. We ended up tearing them in half, and used the pieces by covering one eye, and holding a lens over the other eye!

Once the darkness receded, we made a wise choice to not hang around. We got back in the car, and went home. It was "only" a four hour return trip for us, and we were home by 8:30pm.

We don't regret making the trek, because it truly felt like we had been part of something big.

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**From Jonathan Bush:**

While expectations were very high for driving north and experiencing the eclipse in the path of totality, as opposed to staying home where we were in the 93% coverage area, it exceeded those lofty expectations by a mile (or maybe a lightyear!).

On the day of the eclipse my wife and I drove to Jeffersonville, VT, where some friends live in a house on a hillside just north of Smugglers Notch. We watched the eclipse from their driveway while surrounded by about a foot of snow (aka, a large reflector) on their wooded lot. It was the perfect vantage point facing south.

I would say that the most amazing thing (and I think I speak for all of those present) was the transition from 99% coverage of the sun to 100% coverage and into the totality phase. It's been said many times, but that last 1% makes all the difference. Up until that last sliver of light, the sunlight had been diminishing slowly and gradually while allowing our eyes to easily adjust, but when we entered into the totality phase, the light changed so quickly it was as if someone threw a main power switch. The state of darkness came so quickly that we all let out an audible and loud gasp and "WOW!!!!" I think I rubbed my eyes because I had a hard time believing what I saw and it also took a minute to adjust to the change in lighting.

The filmstrip sequence below, from Lightroom, showing part of my bracketing mid-stream (7 exposures: -3, -2, -1, 0, +1, +2, +3) helps to tell the story. Frame #3723 was the -3 stop exposure to begin a new sequence and during that moment the last of the sunlight flashed and we entered totality. When I looked up, the sky that I was so familiar with for all of my years on earth looked like nothing I had ever seen. I felt as though I had been transported instantly to another planet. It was simply astounding.

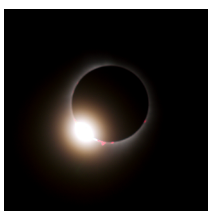


*"I think my proper response is complete amazement and awe at the universe that we are in, and how it works is just far more complicated than humans will ever properly understand." - John C. Mather*

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**From Mary Coombs:**

In 2017 I heard the next total eclipse would sweep the country and go through the Northeast in 2024. I was determined to see it in Vermont. I found a great place to stay for a couple of nights right on the Mad River in the center of Warren, VT. My husband Will, my daughter Amelia, our dog Riley, and our good friend Paul Loiselle (now a member of AVCC) drove up on Sunday to avoid the crowds so we had a leisurely Monday morning to scope out the area (beautiful!), and the skies, as clouds were moving in. Sugarbush Resort, about 3 miles away, was hosting a big eclipse party with a band and festivities that we opted to avoid! We settled in along the playing field of the local school and set up our tripods. There were scattered groups around the field and as we watched and waited strangers became friends. Luckily the clouds were wispy and did not interfere with the spectacle we were about to witness. As the sun was gradually eaten away I was thinking how this event was interpreted by people before science provided an explanation - it must have been terrifying. The air became still and eerie and the atmosphere became a steely grey green. The temperature dropped precipitously. And then all of a sudden, like a flash, the diamond ring was visible! The roar of the crowd at Sugarbush was clearly audible combined with our own expressions of amazement. Off came the eclipse glasses! The sky became very dark and the sun's corona, Bailey's beads, and prominences commanded our attention for this brief moment of time. All too soon the diamond ring appeared again and a sliver of sun reappeared - eclipse glasses back on. My daughter, who watched from the middle of the playing field (which was snow covered), reported seeing light waves rippling across the field - a phenomenon called "shadow bands" which occurs just before and just after totality. [Shadow Bands](#) Witnessing the total eclipse was a most remarkable experience. We stayed in VT that night so were fortunate to miss the crush of traffic as we headed home the next day. So I heard the next one is in 2026, visible from Greenland, Iceland, and Spain. Field trip anyone?



*Diamond Ring - Mary Coombs*



*Riley, Mary, and Paul - Images Courtesy of Amelia Young*

*"The most beautiful thing we can experience is the mysterious. It is the source of all true art and all science." - Albert Einstein*

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## Member Snapshot - continued from page 13

Here are some accounts and photos from a group of AVCC members affectionately dubbed the A Team for their grit and determination!

### From Jim Williams - “Captain”

The eclipse was a great experience with a team of very special people (Darlene, Lynn, Glenn) to share it with. Having left at three am to be certain that we got a prime spot at the St. Albans Bay Park (12 miles from the Canadian border) created a very long day for us. We were in the truck for eleven and one half hours out of the twenty three and a half hours that we were together for this event. They were very pleasant hours aside from the fact that the return was long and tiring.

The location was beautiful being on a bay of Lake Champlain. The terrain is very flat in the Lake Champlain valley especially to the west allowing a distant view. Snow on the high peaks region of the



*Image courtesy of a Passer By*



*Lake Champlain - Lynn Kerner*

Adirondacks could be seen. We set up near the middle of a fifteen hundred + foot long grass strip between a paved path and the beach. A lot of other photographers were getting there early for the same reason and chose a location on that strip. When the parking area for the park was full they closed the park limiting the crowd. There were families and dogs and people carrying cameras, a very congenial easy going group. A lot of people stopped and chatted with us, conversation was easy we were all there for the same reason.

the sun bleeding in on the edge of totality to the west over the Adirondacks. The team, the crowd, the anticipation, the preparation, the photography, the lighting, the birds, the temperature, the long day, It was an experience filled with fond memories that I cherish and will never forget.

Totality was an amazing experience. It was astonishing to see the eerie darkness with

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**From Lynn Kerner**

Our group was a total of four – a determined Jim Williams, and three brave souls (Darlene Holman, Glenn Fund and I) who accompanied/followed him on his adventure to VT – not Burlington or Sugar Loaf, where everyone else was going, but a half hour north to St Albans, a small town on the edge of Lake Champlain. Jim thoroughly researched all aspects of the trip. Darlene was co-expert on timing of shots, what settings to use when, when to catch the diamond ring, Bailey's beads, etc. Jim and Darlene actually practiced two or three times. Me? Nope. Add to that a new and unfamiliar camera, and not much advance study. I almost didn't go. Then I just got a little "zen" about it – just enjoy the experience, whatever it brings.

Getting more and more concerned about logistics, Jim kept moving back the departure time from 8 a.m., to 6 a.m., to 3 a.m. Yikes! He'd picked a town park right on the lake, where there was a planned gathering. We arrived at 7 a.m., having had no traffic getting there. We got almost the first parking spot. Each of us contributed food for the day. We walked around chatting with other photographers and just folks who came out for the event. While we waited, Jim and Darlene helped me get set up - just perfectly as it turned out. Highlights of the day were the last bit of sun before totality, the deep quiet that came over the ducks on the lake as the sun disappeared, the coolness and dark, seeing – and capturing - the prominences and corona. The gasps of awe in the crowd were also memorable. It was 24 hours straight, but a never-to-be-forgotten experience of camaraderie, and nature in all its glory and intensity.



*Lake Champlain at Totality - Lynn Kerner*

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**From Darlene Holman:**

(A member of the A Team - Jim Williams, Lynn Kerner, Glenn Fund, and Darlene)

Kudos to Jim, our event Captain because he picked a great location for witnessing the Solar eclipse. The vantage point over Lake Champlain was ideal. A few wispy clouds arrived right before totality barely affecting our images. The entire event was amazing! We started out for Saint Albans, VT at 3am and returned the next day the same time. Every moment was filled with excitement and adventure. It was a dreamy experience, which will be engrained in my brain forever. One of my favorite moments of the eclipse was the capture of Bailey's beads and the Prominences. The image is included below. The beads were captured the instant the total eclipse ended and only lasted a few seconds. They are caused by mountains, valleys, and craters on the moons edge. The beads before totality were not as prominent. Another favorite was when many confused birds took flight over the lake vocalizing loudly.

I am grateful to all our team members for a great time and journey!



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## Member Snapshot - continued from page 16

And then there was the 2017 eclipse that graced the Northwest. Club members Sue Abrahamsen and Bob Cooke ventured to Idaho to get the best possible eclipse experience they could.

### From Bob Cooke:

I've got dozens of great eclipse photos -- but from about seven years ago -- when Sue Abrahamsen and I (plus a handful of friends) journeyed to northern Idaho for a very similar eclipse (actually they look almost identical). You might have a good time comparing some of these photos with the brand new ones. We were at relatively high altitude (mountain-top) back then and it might be fun to compare the two (very similar) events.

- Bob Cooke

### From Sue Abrahamsen:

I took the Solar eclipse pictures when I went to Idaho with Bob Cooke in 2017.

My Camera was Canon EOS T6i with 100-400 lens at 400 (600).

I pre-focused before the event and never looked through view finder. The auto focus was off.

I checked the sun's movement using the camera's LCD.

I had fun creating the composites after I got home.

Here are Sue's processed images from that event - how do they compare?





**Zooming Out** - Members and AVCC in the greater photographic community - member exhibits, competitions, meetups, field trip opportunities, workshops, etc.

**Zooming In** - A Reflection, Musing, or Experience (travel, how I got that great shot, my favorite photo or place to shoot for example) shared by a member

**Tips and Tricks** - Members' shared suggestions for the Monthly Theme

**The Bigger Picture** - Happenings in the World of Photography

Many thanks to the following members for their contributions to this month's Newsletter: Cathy Robotis, Lynn Kerner, Mary Coombs, Jim Williams, Pam Meoli, John Mauro, Linda Shelales, Darlene Holman, Glenn Fund, Sheri Craig, Jane Parker, Bob Cooke, Jonathan Bush, Nick Andruzzi, Paul Loiselle, Sue Abrahamsen, Bridget Perch, Natalie Schiavone.

### Zooming Out

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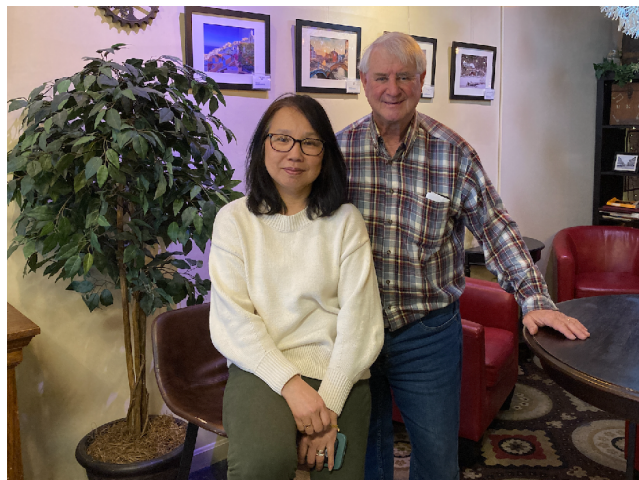
#### On the Wall at Cafe 641

This month Cafe 641 will feature the work of an artist, Melba Juez-Perrone (non- AVCC).

Support the Arts and pay a visit!

In June we will see images by AVCC member Bob Cooke.

*"I think about photographs as being full, or empty. You picture something in a frame and it's got lots of accounting going on in it--stones and buildings and trees and air--but that's not what fills up a frame. You fill up the frame with feelings, energy, discovery, and risk, and leave room enough for someone else to get in there." - Joel Meyerowitz*



*Dawn Law and Glenn Fund at Cafe 641*

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Zooming Out - continued from page 18

### **News and recommendations from our members:**

#### **From Darlene Holman:**

Hello Everyone,

Please see the following link to view this Basic Photo YouTube Tutorial by Nebula Photos by Nico Carver. I hope this is useful to enlarge and bring out details in the striations aka streamers of your total eclipse photos without increasing too much noise. You will have more control over the noise than you would simply using the slider options.

I recommend this and have found these techniques to be very useful for enhancements. Let me know how you like this. I would love to see some results.

Good Luck!!

Nebula Photos

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ILi9qcfp\\_dE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ILi9qcfp_dE)

#### **From Mary Coombs:**

Here's another eclipse image processing video by Matt Kloskowski:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2CMD0I-FZkA>

And for those of you looking for more resources for shooting aircraft here's one I found informative:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tZ8iZNilBk8>



*Untitled - Paul Loiselle*

Continued on next page

## Zooming Out - continued from page 19

From Linda DeStefano Brown

I am so pleased to announce that I have work that was accepted in two juried shows, Plymouth Center for the Arts and Hopkinton Center for the Arts. For anyone who cannot make it to either of these events, I am attaching the images I have in them.

Plymouth: The 14th Annual Fine Art of Photography will be on display from **May 4 to June 9** at their location on 11 North Street, Plymouth MA. The exhibit is of Fine Art Photography, non-themed. The two images that were accepted are *Veiled Love* and *River Flow*.

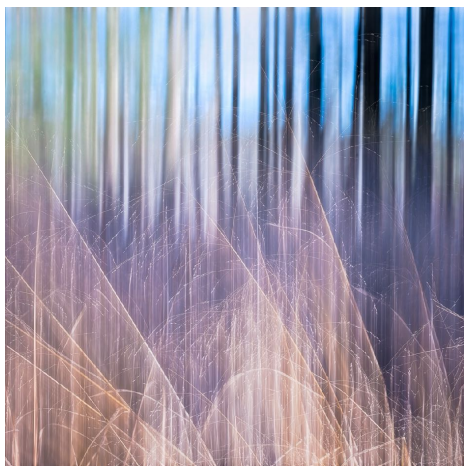
Hopkinton: This juried show will be displayed from **April 23 - May 23** at their location on 98 Haden Street, Hopkinton MA. The theme of this 19th Annual Arts in Bloom exhibit is *Harmony of Opposites*. There will also be some floral arrangements inspired by the artwork. My piece is titled *Feel the Breeze*.

The effect of all three was done by intentionally moving the camera while a slow shutter speed was used, usually held open for about 1 second. The gentle movement adds a dreamlike mystery to them revealing the beauty of movements and a sense of calm. I hope you enjoy this visual play.

Also, my piece Feel the Breeze was selected by the Garden Club in Hopkinton and will be creating a floral arrangement from that photograph.



Veiled Love  
- Linda DeStefano Brown



Feel the Breeze  
- Linda DeStefano Brown



River Flow - Linda DeStefano Brown



## Zooming In

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There have been a few field trips lately and here are some accounts and photos of two separate field trips to Wicked Tulips in Exeter, Rhode Island shared by members:

### **From Sheri Craig - Field trip to Wicked Tulips in Exeter, RI with Darlene Holman on April 15:**

Wicked Tulips was a lovely tulip farm in the middle of Rhode Island. The large you pick tulip farm was planting with acres of rows and rows that presented as a rainbow of colors. I enjoyed searching the fields wandering around exploring all of the various rainbows of colors.

It was a real treat to be outside on a sunny day and play with my camera in the large field of tulips. Taking flower pictures in my yard is a favorite way to brighten my day, so the tulip farm was a treat. My favorite part of the trip was the tulip picking. Bringing a bundle of tulips home extended the ability to take tulip photos after the trip.

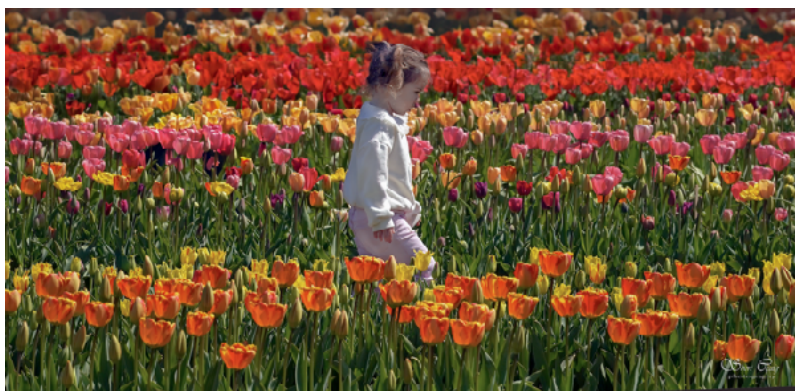
I didn't realize the date we chose was the week of spring vacation week. When we first arrived it was already busy. We definitely would have preferred less people. However, it turned out that the delight of the families enjoying the beautiful day was fun to witness.

Later that week my friend invited me to join her to visit the tulip farm in Hudson Ma. In comparison Wicked Tulips had a wider variety of tulips and colors, but not the delicious cider donuts. The Hudson farm was more difficult to walk as the rows had mounds in the middle versus flat rows at Wicked Tulips.

Overall it was a day full of color and appreciating the promise of spring.



*Wicked Tulips - Darlene Holman*



*Image Courtesy of Sheri Craig*

Continued on next page

## Zooming In - Field Trips - continued from page 21

From Mary Coombs - Field Trip to Wicked Tulips in Exeter, RI with Jim Williams, Glenn Fund, and Neil Swinton on April 18:

Once again Jim Williams was at the wheel as we drove down to Rhode Island. Unlike Sheri and Darlene we had a raw, wet day at the tulip farm. Fortunately we were there for the best weather the day had to offer, cool with a slight mist. We left as the rain became more persistent. That being said, the fields were beautiful with an amazing array of colors and tulip varieties. We too enjoyed picking bouquets providing opportunity for some indoor shots. Thanks to Jim for driving!



*Neil with his 10 Stems  
- Mary Coombs*



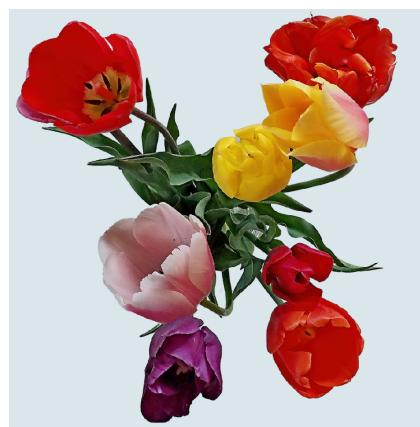
*Image courtesy of Glenn Fund*

### Upcoming field trips:

May 2 - Butterfly Place in Westford, MA. AVCC has an exclusive time frame from 9-10AM to spend in the butterfly habitat. Cost \$17

June 21 - SummitWynds - Lavender Days 3-9 PM

Check out the events page on the website for more information about these and other field trips.



*Image Courtesy of  
Glenn Fund*



## Tips and Tricks - May's Theme: Photographing Things in Flight

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### Tips for Photographing Things in Flight

As we coast into May, enjoying the reawakening of our natural world and the birth of new life that comes with Spring, we raise our keen eyes and camera lenses in search of birds, insects, and things that fly or are airborne for our last competition month of the 2023-2024 Assabet Valley Camera Club season. In literature, the concept of taking flight often symbolizes freedom and/or soaring over the obstacles in our lives. It may also represent a sense of spirituality for some. For many of us, the sight and sounds of airplanes conjure heartfelt memories of Elliot and his love of the world of aviation. Here are some helpful tips and tricks to consider as you venture out to capture your next great image of things in flight.

#### General pointers

- Your goal is to capture a sharp image without losing the essence of it. If you shoot with too fast of a shutter speed, you will steal the subject's spirit. If your shutter speed is too slow, the image will be blurry. Blur is a stylistic choice for some, but it can also ruin an image.
- If you are handholding your camera, keep your hands steady. Hold your camera with both hands. One hand should hold the camera, and the other should support the lens. Support the lens from underneath it, not above. Keep your arms tight against your body and swivel from the waist. Smoothness in motion is key to obtaining a sharp image.
- When the situation permits, use a tripod. If you are working with a long or heavy lens, use a tripod collar.
- You may consider propping your arms over a solid surface or leaning against a wall if you can't use a tripod but have these options available to you.
- Keep your finger steady on the shutter button. Don't push down too hard, and don't lift too quickly. Even this slight movement can blur your image.
- Hold your breath when taking the photo, or exhale slowly.



*Tree Swallow Breeding Behavior*  
- Darlene Holman

Continued on next page

## Tips for Photographing Things in Flight - continued from page 23

- Use burst or continuous mode; this will give you several photos in rapid succession, which will increase the chance of having one in focus.
- The sharpest aperture on any lens is usually 2-3 stops from wide open (typically f/8-f/11).
- “Every time you halve or double the speed of the shutter, from 1/125 to 1/250 for example, you increase or decrease the exposure of the image by one stop. This is equal to doubling or halving your ISO or widening or narrowing your aperture by one f-stop.” (makeuseof.com).
- When hand holding your camera, set the shutter speed to the focal length to avoid camera shake. For example, if you are shooting at 300 mm, you need to set the shutter speed to 1/300 or faster.
- If you are having trouble focusing with a wider aperture, consider using a smaller aperture (f/8 or f/11) so more parts of the image will be in focus.

### Photographing flying insects:

- Persistence is key, and mastering this skill will take time, practice, and a lot of patience.
- You should take the time to study insect behaviors and flight patterns.
- Morning is the best time to photograph insects because they are generally slower in the morning.
- Recommended lenses include a 70-300 mm lens or a macro lens that is capable of at least 1:1 macro. A NiSi close up filter will convert your regular lens to a macro.
- Use a tripod whenever possible, and look for a colorful garden for your photo shoot. You may also bring props, such as a colorful, blurred background to place in the scene.
- Camera settings: If you are very confident, you can set your shutter speed for 1/800, but you may find that 1/2000 or even up to 1/4000 works better. Set your ISO to auto, so there is one less thing to worry about as you are trying to capture your moving subject. You will probably need an aperture of f/5.6 to f/8 to allow you to capture the entire insect in focus.
- If your subject will remain at the same distance, you can use AF-S (autofocus-single servo). If your subject will be moving to and fro, use AF-C (autofocus-continuous).
- If you are shooting in manual focus, you can prefocus on a leaf or flower, and when the insect arrives, you can slightly adjust to bring the insect into focus.
- When you are taking your photos, focus on the eyes.



*Companions at the End*  
- John McKinney

*“Adopt the pace of nature: her secret is patience.” ~Ralph Waldo Emerson*

Continued on next page

## Tips for Photographing Things in Flight - continued from page 24

- Dragonflies: Look for ponds with lily pads or reeds, and look for spots where they tend to congregate. The best time to capture dragonflies is early morning or later in the afternoon.
- Honeybees: They are easier to photograph when they are pollinating because they will pause in the air to brush off the pollen.
- Butterflies: They will flutter over flowers when they are looking for nectar.
- Wasps: They will pause before entering their paper or mud nests
- Hover-flies: They will pause regularly as part of their flight pattern, making them the easiest insects to photograph in flight.

### Photographing birds in flight:

- Position yourself with the wind and sun at your back. Birds generally fly into the wind, so they will be flying at you at an angle, allowing you to capture their underwings with their heads leading the way. They also fly slower when they fly into the wind, making them easier to capture. If the sun is behind you, it will better illuminate the bird in flight.
- Shoot against a clear background when possible.
- Adopt an athletic stance, with your legs spread apart and your knees slightly bent.
- Prefocus on something in the area where you expect to capture the bird (such as vegetation on the ground at approximately the distance where the bird will be passing), raise your camera, and wait for the bird to fly into your frame.
- Shutter speed: You will probably need 1/2500-1/3200 or maybe even faster. For slower moving birds, 1/1600-1/2500 may work.
- Aperture: You should try to work with f/5.6 to f/8 (if the lighting situation permits). You want to ensure that the entire bird is in focus.
- If you are shooting in manual mode, you can use the sky as your basis for exposure. You should make it as light as possible without overexposing the sky or the bird.
- [allaboutbirds.org](http://allaboutbirds.org) recommends that your image stabilization should be OFF because it can make it harder to track your subject, and it will slow your lens performance.



*Gull in Flight - Liz Krouse*

Continued on next page

**Photographing airplanes in motion:**

- Make sure you show enough of the background to help tell the story whenever possible.
- Matrix metering will help prevent an overexposed sky.
- Set your camera to AF-C with AI tracking if available.
- Make sure the focus points are in the center of frame.
- Consider shooting in Shutter Speed Priority, with a shutter speed of 1/1000-1/2000 for jets. \*\*\*If you are shooting a propeller plane in the air, you will need a slower shutter speed because you will need to show the motion of the propellers. If you freeze the propellers, it will look unnatural because the plane would not be airborne if not for the spinning of the propellers.
- Set your ISO to auto.
- You can also try panning and working with a slower shutter speed.

**Sources**

Makeuseof.com; canva.com; photzy.com; brentmailphotography.com; shootsmart.co.uk; naturettl.com; allaboutbirds.org.



*Final approach to Dulles Airport - Elliot Mednick*

*"I'd rather chase the Sun than wait for it." - Markus Zusak*

## The Bigger Picture

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### Upcoming Photography Workshops and Programs

#### **New England Camera Club Council**

- Virtual Event: July 13, 2024, 12:30 pm - 3:15 pm.
- 2 sessions: Jim Zuckerman and Seth Resnick.
- For more information and registration:  
[NECCC Virtual Event](#)

#### **American Graphics Institute, Boston, MA**

- They offer courses on studio lighting, lighting and composition, beginner/intermediate photography, Photoshop Lightroom, real estate photography, and SmartPhone/iPhone photography.
- For more information: [agitraining.com](http://agitraining.com).

#### **Hunt's Photo, Melrose, MA**

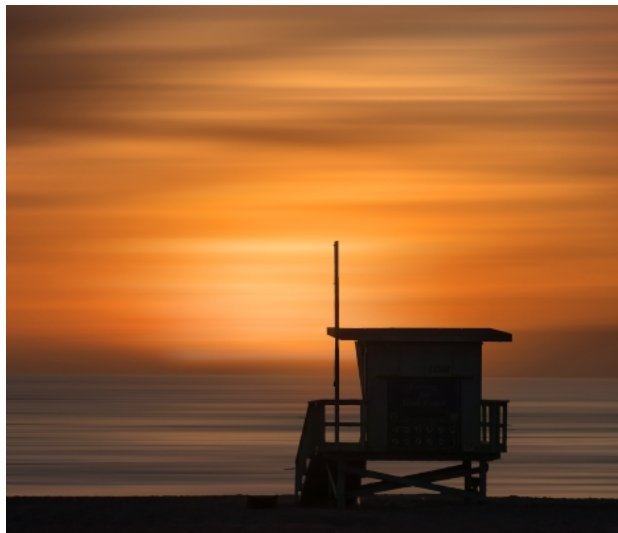
- They offer photo walks, photo adventures, and classes.
- Upcoming in-person and online courses include: Beginner photo series, Lightroom, Photographing migratory and songbirds (online), and Landscape photography.
- Hunts Photo Walk: 5/5/24, 7 am - 10 am: Recognizing and Photographing Birds at Mount Auburn Cemetery.
- Hunts Workshop: Steam Punk in Waltham, 5/11/24, 9:30 am to 5 pm.
- For more information: [www.edu.huntsphoto.com](http://www.edu.huntsphoto.com).

#### **Boston Photography Workshops**

- They offer online and in-person classes on a variety of topics, including: Digital Cameras I & II, Better Composition/Photowalk, Organizing Photos, Night Photography, Food Photography, Portraiture, and Lightroom Classic.
- For further information: [bostonphotographyworkshops.com](http://bostonphotographyworkshops.com).

#### **Worcester State University**

- They offer many interesting courses, such as: Discover Digital Photography, Mastering your Digital SLR or Mirrorless Camera, Secrets of Better Photography, Photographing Nature with your Digital Camera, Photographing People with your Digital Camera, Intro to Lightroom Classic CC, and Photoshop Elements for the Digital Photographer.
- Classes are typically 24 course hours over 6 weeks, and prices range from \$115-\$335.
- Further information: [ed2go.com](http://ed2go.com).



*The Adamski Effect at Marina del Rey  
- Todd Mathieson*

Continued on next page



The Bigger Picture - continued from page 27

### **Assabet After Dark**

- Macro/Close-up Photography: 5/22/24-5/29/24 (Wednesday-Saturday), 6-8 pm.
- For more information: [assabetace.org](http://assabetace.org) (look for their Spring 2024 Course Catalog).

### **Middlesex Community College**

- They offer a Digital Photography Certificate Program which includes courses such as Digital Photography I, Digital Photography II, The Business of Photography, and Adobe Photoshop Creative Cloud.
- Contact: [middlesex.mass.edu](http://middlesex.mass.edu).

### **Silvana Della Camera**

- See her website for her many upcoming workshops and more: [Silvana Della Camera](http://SilvanaDellaCamera.com).



*Simple Pleasure - Eric Frere*

### **Photography Exhibits**

#### **Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, MA**

- The Howard Greenberg Collection (ongoing).

#### **Leica Gallery in Boston, MA**

- Maggie Steber, Rania Matar, Eva Woolridge: Can You See Me?, 4/25/24-6/8/24.

#### **Panopticon Gallery in Boston, MA**

- Alex Joseph Hansen: Glacier: Bradford Washburn's Mountain Photography Meets Contemporary Counterpart, 5/1/24-7/30/24.

#### **Worcester Art Museum in Worcester, MA**

- New Terrain: 21st Century Landscape Photography, 4/6/24-7/7/24.
- Elegant Alien by Claudio Eshun, 11/8/23-5/5/24..

Continued on next page



## The Bigger Picture - Continued from Page 28

### **Griffin Museum in Winchester, MA**

- Alejandro Cartagena, Muriel Hasten, Alejandro Luperca: Huellas de Existencia/Traces of Existence, 4/6/24-6/9/24.
- Rodrigo Valenzuela: Nuevas Tierras/New Lands, 4/6/24-6/9/24.
- Ileana Doble Hernandez: Una Mexicana in Gringolandia, 4/6/24-6/9/24.

### **Robert Klein Gallery in Boston, MA**

- Olivia Parker: Persephone's Graffiti, 3/21/24-5/4/24
- Zohar Dashti: Disappearing Nature, 3/21/24-5/4/24.

## **Photography Competitions**

### **Vienna International Photo Awards 2024**

- Deadline: 6/15/24.
- Prizes include an exhibition at VIE Photo in September 2024 in Vienna. Winners also receive the VIEPA photo book.
- Contact: [www.viepa.org](http://www.viepa.org)

### **National Landscape Photography Awards**

- Deadline: 7/31/24.
- Category: Landscape Nature.
- Cash prizes.
- Contact: [nationallandscapeawards.com](http://nationallandscapeawards.com)

### **International Photography Awards (IPA)**

- Deadline 5/31/24.
- Entry fee: \$30.
- Cash Prizes
- Categories include: Aerial, Architecture, B&W, Cityscapes, Conceptual, Sports, Travel, Photojournalism, Fashion, Self-portrait, Abstract, Digital Art.
- Contact: [www.photoawards.com](http://www.photoawards.com).

### **International Garden Photographer of the Year**

- Deadline: 10/31/24.
- Cash prizes
- Categories include: The Beauty of Plants, Abstract Views, Beautiful Gardens, and more.
- Contact: [igpoty.com](http://igpoty.com)



*Damselfly on a Stem - John Gill*



AVCC is a member of the following organizations:

NECCC



PSA



AVCC website:

<https://www.assabetvalleycc.com>

2023-2024 Executive Board Members:

- President: John Mauro
- Vice President: Mary Coombs
- Secretary: Pam Meoli
- Treasurer: Glenn Fund



*Garden Stakeout - Sheri Craig*

Editors' Note:

Many(!) club members work behind the scenes in various capacities to make the club run smoothly, to engage with the greater community, to reach out to prospective members, to communicate about our organization through the Facebook page, the AVCC website, the Focal Point Newsletter, the Action Unlimited, and provide opportunities for competition, exhibitions, fun, learning, and camaraderie. To see (most) of the volunteer positions and members please refer to your 2023-2024 Member packet. Also see pages 9-13 of this issue of AVCC Focal Point. Consider volunteering!